



Exploring incentives for socio-ecological transformation in India

Hope, R.A¹, M. Borgoyary, M². and C. Agarwal²

(1) Oxford University Centre for the Environment, Dyson Perrins Building, South Parks Road, Oxford, OX1 3QY, UK (robert.hope@ouce.ox.ac.uk ; tel: 00 44 1865 275881);

(2) Winrock International India, 788 Udyog Vihar, Phase V, Gurgaon 122001, India

This paper discusses how exploratory modelling of social preferences to land use change can guide public and private investments for rural development and environmental management goals in India. Participatory assessment informs a choice experiment approach to investigate trade-off scenarios in adopting organic land management to mitigate off-site water quality damage to the Bhoj wetland, which provides the city of Bhopal with 40% of its municipal water supply. Modelling analysis across land conversion, crop price, input cost, labour allocation and collective action attributes indicates the ‘*right*’ suite of incentives can promote the adoption of a more benign and integrated land management system, subject to farm location, farmer profile and current farming practices. We argue that improved understanding of societal constraints and behavioural responses in complex and dynamic land use mosaics is a key condition to contribute to more effective private and/or public investments in shifting to more benign and socially-acceptable land use management. We conclude that farmer behavioural change will be contingent upon receiving transitional payments in the process of organic land certification, which could then act as a self-enforcing institutional mechanism for maintaining societal and ecosystem benefits.